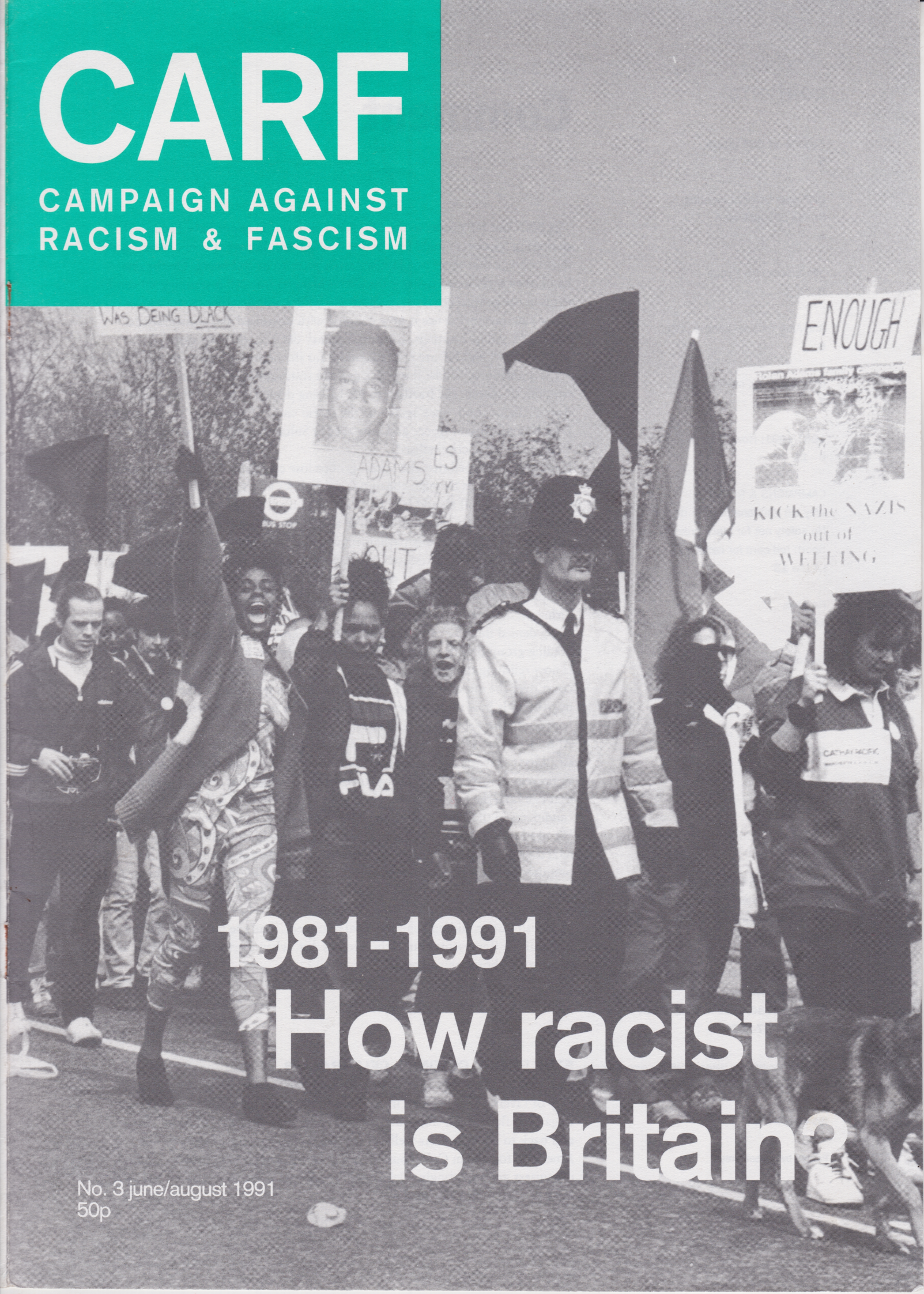
CARF

CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACISM & FASCISM



1981-1991

How racist is Britain?

No. 3 june/august 1991
50p

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Comment

The BNP and NF results in the May local elections may not have been earth-shattering (pathetic would be a better description), but what is of concern is the dual strategy that these two fascist parties seem to be following. On the one hand, they seem set to re-enter the electoral arena (the NF is standing 60 candidates in the general election, the BNP 10) whilst, on the other, a strategy of provoking racial violence is now coupled with organised and conspiratorial attacks on public meetings, where incendiary devices are being used.

That the BNP and NF are not recognised for the odious criminal outfits that they are is scandalous. Whilst the police and the state continue to pontificate about freedom of speech, the freedom to life is being denied to young black people like Rolan Adams. And, once again - as the recent cases of Mr Altaf, Mr Govindan, Bina Kumari, Brian Moore and now that of Sultan Mohammed show - the victims are being criminalised.

It can only be hoped that the fascist groups lose credibility through poor election results; lose cadres through conspiratorial politics and violent attacks that (all things being equal) should lead to prison sentences. But we cannot sit idly by and wait for this to happen. With the BNP and NF no doubt hoping that a general election will lead to a hung parliament and the possibility of proportional representation being introduced, the scenario outlined above of racial violence and police criminalisation of the black community is set to intensify.

In April, the BNP wrote to local authorities to ascertain their position about hiring premises, arguing that freedom of speech and freedom of assembly were being denied the BNP. Leaving aside their ludicrous claim that the BNP is a law-abiding group that does not promote public disorder, it is obvious that the BNP is now relishing the prospect of stirring up trouble through legal battles in the court over the question of freedom of speech. The question for the anti-fascist movement is how to deny the fascists the oxygen of publicity whilst effectively frustrating their electoral ambitions.

AFA in Tower Hamlets and anti-fascists in Rochdale, Leicester, Hemel Hempstead have recently shown what can be done by direct action at a grassroots level to prevent fascists holding their propaganda meetings. But we also need groups that can take the fascists on at other levels. If the NF does indeed stand 60 candidates in the general election, it will be allowed a party political broadcast. We need media-workers to form groups, to campaign to 'Pull the plugs from the nazi thugs'. We need teachers to combine against the fascists using school premises for their race-hate meetings. Local authorities, too, need to do far more actively to oppose the fascists, instead of wringing their hands in despair when the law prioritises freedom of speech over freedom to life and makes a mockery of British justice, hiding behind a legal argument. And the farce that the police make of the Representation of the Peoples Act, when election meetings are held, needs to be thoroughly exposed.

STOP PRESS: COLONIAL CELEBRATION

1992 will be the 500th anniversary of Colombus' arrival in the Americas. The City of Liverpool is involved in celebrating the event by hosting the Colombus Regatta, a fleet of tall ships that will sail from Spain to the Caribbean, the US and back to Liverpool. As well as insulting the indigenous peoples of the Americas, for whom Colombus' arrival was not a cause for celebration, the organisers are unwittingly celebrating the colonial slave trade routes. See next issue of CARF for more details.

Scandal of BNP attack

London's black community is up in arms over the negligent manner in which the police are handling a BNP attack on a black meeting at Friends' House, Euston, on Wednesday 1 May. The 500-strong meeting, which was due to be addressed by the Reverend Al Sharpton, was attacked by a group of BNP supporters who threw an incendiary device into the room before attempting a get-away. To date, the police have not charged a single member of the BNP for this murderous attack, yet a black man, Sultan Mohammed, was charged with assault and threatening behaviour. The assault charge was so ludicrous that a magistrate subsequently threw it out.

Minutes before the attack took place, the police had evacuated the building following a bomb threat. Despite this, a 13-strong group of nazis passed with ease through the police net. When three of them attempted to gain entry, a steward, who had spotted another 10 fascists lurking in the doorway, stopped them, whereupon he was punched in the face. One of the BNP then ran into the meeting and lobbed the smoke bomb, which, thankfully, failed to ignite.

The fascists then fled, with black youth giving chase. Nine of the 'master race' managed to drive off in a white transit van, leaving four other fascists stranded. One of the BNP members was knocked to the ground by a passing car, breaking all his fingers in the process.

The police were outside whilst all this was going on, but were more interested in arguing with the black youth than arresting the fascists who, apart from the one unconscious member, were allowed to escape. One person at the meeting told CARF that when he handed to a police officer a batch of BNP literature which the fascists had dropped, the police officer showed absolutely no interest. It was at this point that Sultan Mohammed, a race equality officer, was arrested. He was only released when 200 people marched on Holborn police station. At the police station, police allegedly laughed and joked with the arrested BNP member before releasing him without charge.

On 2 May a picture of police officers assisting a young man appeared in the *Evening Standard* with a caption implying he was an innocent bystander. In fact it was BNP activist Ian Dell.

Sickened by police apathy over the case, the *Voice* newspaper has launched an appeal for witnesses. The Society for Black Lawyers is coordinating witness statements and photographic evidence and Newham Monitoring Project is assisting Sultan Mohammed's defence. The Reverend Al Sharpton, who gave a press conference at Heathrow Airport before flying back to the US, says he will return to London for Sultan Mohammed's trial. 'His only crime was to defend the meeting from fascists', he said. 'He came out for me, now it's my turn to come out for him.'

Serious questions remain, however, about the police's handling of the case. Why did the police allow the fascists to get away from the scene and ignore the initial evidence of the BNP attack? Why were no witness statements, including that of the black steward who had been violently assaulted by the gang, taken from the meeting-goers? Was the BNP's headquarters raided straight after the attack, and what attempts have been made to locate the white transit van (which could have been followed there and then) in which the attackers escaped? Why wasn't the arrested BNP member charged immediately, instead of being allowed out on bail with no charges brought against him?

CARF urges all its readers to write to the Crown Prosecution Service, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan police and DC Howells at Holborn police station, urging them to drop the remaining charge of threatening behaviour against Sultan Mohammed and concentrate instead on bringing the correct criminal charges against the BNP gang which launched this attack. Copies of your letters should be sent to CARF which will be passed on to the campaign.

MAY LOCAL ELECTIONS

BNP	Rochdale (Small Bridge & Wardelworth)	Kenneth Henderson	158 votes.
BNP	Leicestershire (Coalville)	James Nigel Taylor	106 votes.
BNP	Leicester (New Parks)	John Peacock	54 votes.
NF	Coventry (Cheylesmore)	Frank Thomas Bates	110 votes.
NF	Dudley (St. James)	Nolan Andrew Edward	92 votes.
NF	H. Hempstead (Chaulden)	John Charles McAuley	18 votes.

In New Parks, Leicester, the hopes of BNP candidate John Peacock, were severely dented after an anti-fascist campaign. A free newspaper delivered throughout the area urged residents not to vote for this known nazi. The local tenants' association protested against holding a BNP meeting in a local school. The meeting attracted only a handful of local BNP supporters, with around 60 fascists from London and Nottingham. Speeches were drowned out by anti-fascist chants and the meeting ended early.

A similar pattern of anti-fascist activity and fascist humilitation occurred in Rochdale. A NF election meeting in Hemel Hempstead was attended by only 30 fascists who were forced to leave town under a police escort.

BNP plan October meeting

The BNP has written to several borough councils about their 'position with regard to hiring premises for a meeting by our organisation'. The letter, a masterpiece of hypocrisy written by the BNP's Richard Heaton, laments the lack of 'freedom and democratic rights here in the United Kingdom', as demonstrated by the fact that some local authorities have refused the BNP the use of their premises. Comparing its situation with the people of the USSR, Kuwait and Iraq, the BNP asserts that no meaningful claim to 'democracy' can be claimed until it is allowed to expound its racist - and, although it omits to mention it, fascist - ideology in the public arena.

In the past, the BNP has followed a deliberately provocative policy of booking venues in areas with a large black community. Now, the BNP is asking the local authorities to grant it a room for a closed meeting some time in October.

In its letter the BNP claims that 'all disorders, without exception, at meetings held by this organisation have been planned, promoted and carried out by our political opponents'. The audacity of this claim is laughable. The leadership of the BNP is riddled with a history of racist violence.

The fact remains that the BNP has been engaged in a strategy of terror against the black community for years. Its campaign has never been overly concerned with democratic niceties nor human rights. To take seriously its claim of a democratic right to launch a violent attack, for that is the reality of the situation, at the heart of the black communities is absurd. It is hoped that the borough councils that receive these letters will treat them with the contempt that they deserve.

Britain on black alert

Long before the 'Everyman' TV exposé of US civil rights preacher Rev Al Sharpton, transmitted on 28 April, the media began to poison our minds against him and orchestrate the campaign to have the man banned from our shores. Paul Cheston started the attack as a soloist in the *Standard* (19.4.91) - 'Keep this race hate preacher out of Brixton - say MPs' was the headline over the feature which informed readers that the man, described as 'the most odious man in America', was coming to Britain 'with his gospel of anti-police activism and race hate'. Clearly, the Home Office was not interested in banning Sharpton, so the story highlighted the campaign by Tory MPs Harry Greenway and Terry Dicks to get an exclusion order.

The *Observer*'s Richard Brooks took up the same theme on 21 April - 'MPs seek to bar black firebrand preacher' went his non-story. And the *Daily Mail* even got a black journalist, Hal Austin (who 20 years ago was exposing state racism in prisons) to call in banner headlines across the front page, 'Keep this man out of Britain'. But Sharpton got in. And, once in, yet more papers joined in the clamour against him. The *Sunday Express* (28.4.91) yelled 'Kick black power leader out of Britain' and quoted yet another MP, Ken Warren, who wanted him to be sent back. The *News of the World* (28.4.91) had Edward Trevor describe the 'Storm as the beast of the Bronx pushed and shoved his way into Britain'.

No doubt, Sharpton did not endear himself to the British press when he pointed out just how they had villified him. But he had good reason. For every paper - from the gutter to the up-market press - had some abuse, ridicule or patronising epithet to contribute. When he was not 'a beast', he was 'volatile', 'a firebrand', 'a self-proclaimed crusader', 'a medallion-man evangelist', 'wild', 'emotive', 'flamboyant'. The media was on special black alert. And they were not going to let us, the British public, make up our own minds about the preacher.

Though the media tried to rake up the Tawana Brawley rape case with which to discredit Sharpton and Everyman showed a former aide accusing him of self-publicity and fraud, Sharpton's major crime seems to be his stand against racism. Britain was led to expect a maniacal fanatic - anti-white, anti-authority, and anti-the media. Sharpton was, indeed, uncompromising about racism, but his style was simple - even homely - his arguments basic and full of commonsense, his manner confident but restrained. To hear the issue of racial justice seriously debated on the Jonathan Ross show to (white) audience approval was an amazing feat. At the London School of Economics, where he spoke to a mainly white audience, he bore with the whites who accused him of making them feel guilty and the blacks who did not want racism overplayed. He was the voice of reason speaking, he said, to our future leaders.

Perhaps the Rolan Adams murder was a convenient peg for Sharpton to win credibility. But the support he gave to the bereaved black family meant that the British mass media gave prominence to an anti-racist march for the first time in 15 years. He may indeed court publicity, but, in the process, the issues of fascist activity in Britain, deportations, police racism and media distortions caught the headlines.

The question the media should be asking themselves is not why, in their terms, Sharpton turned out to be such a damp squib, but why it takes the sensationalism of a visit by a 'foreign expert' to make them notice the racist squalor under their noses.

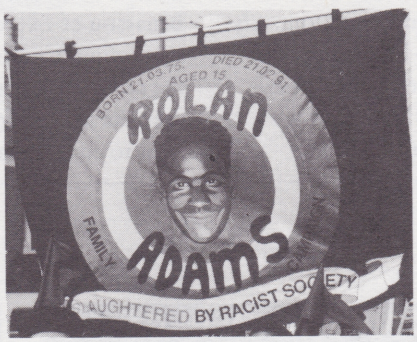
'No Justice, No Peace'

The BNP are settling down for a nasty and protracted campaign in Thamesmead, south-east London where only a few months ago Rolan Adams was brutally murdered and where tension is high following the recent murder of Orville Blair. As we go to press, the BNP have announced that they intend to hold a 'Rights for Whites' march in Thamesmead on May 25th. If the march is banned the BNP say that they will hold a static rally instead and will no doubt use the occasion to pontificate about how freedom of speech is being denied them. But if the march goes ahead the BNP, in keeping with their strategy of promoting race conflict, will have succeeded in inflaming a tense situation still further.

But the BNP have not been getting it all their own way. On Saturday, 27 April 1,500 people, including US civil rights preacher Al Sharpton, marched the six miles from Thamesmead to the BNP headquarters in Bexley to protest at the brutal murder of 15-year-old Rolan Adams on 22 February and at the rise in racist and fascist activity in the area since his death. The march, which was organised by Greenwich Action Committee Against Racist Attacks, was one of the most militant marches against racism for many years. When white youths (one of whom sported a BNP badge) outside the notorious Wild Fowler pub, attempted to taunt the march as it set off, they were given short shrift. Missiles were thrown at the BNP's HQ at Bexley by young, local black people shouting 'This time we march, next time we fight' and 'No justice, no peace'.

The level of anger was hardly surprising given that the situation on Thamesmead has now reached boiling point. In December 1990, Anne Brewster, a youth worker at the Hawksmoor Youth Club, warned police and the council about increasing racial attacks. Since Rolan's murder, a concerted hate campaign has been mounted against the Adams family. Rolan's father told the *Caribbean Times* that 'cars have parked up with white men wearing short haircuts and we changed our telephone number because we kept getting people calling us to tell us how glad they were Rolan had died'. Visitors and friends are constantly abused and BNP leaflets have been delivered to everyone in the area, the Adams family told 'The London Programme'.

Intimidation has increased since eight defendants, charged with public order offences connected with Rolan's murder, were granted bail. According to GACARA, bail conditions state that the defendants must not go within four miles of the Adams' home, but there have been at least three occasions when these conditions were breached. The family of Mark Thornborrow, the 20-year-old charged with murder, also live on Thamesmead.



GACARA is also concerned that the police, far from protecting the Adams' family, are monitoring them and their friends. Owen Benjamin, Rolan's uncle and a regular visitor to the family, has been stopped no less than four times and had his car thoroughly searched. A 14-year-old Afro-Caribbean schoolgirl, a friend of Rolan Adams, was arrested at her home, allegedly for writing on buses. The situation is aggravated by the activities of the BNP, which has had its headquarters in neighbouring Welling since 1989. When defendants arrested in connection with Rolan's murder appeared in court, the court was suddenly plastered with BNP stickers and BNP leaflets, crudely connecting black people to street crime, are being delivered in Thamesmead. Anti-Fascist Action say that the 'Wild Fowler pub is frequented by known local racists and BNP supporters. The Wild Fowler is owned by Whitbread brewery, which, by coincidence, owns the Sun in Bethnal Green, east London, also regularly used by the BNP.'

Thamesmead - a development nightmare

Initially conceived in the heady 1960s, Thamesmead, which spans Greenwich and Bexley, was once hailed as 'London's latest and greatest suburb'. But the dream turned sour. As the plans for its city-centre and to bring in the Jubilee line were abandoned for lack of funds in the 1970s, so too did families opt to live elsewhere. Thamesmead became the housing estate that 'problem families' got dumped on; soon everyone was trying to get a transfer out.

Sold to a private trust in 1985, Thamesmead's problems have continued. Playschemes and clubs have been scrapped, facilities and shops are few and far between. Today Thamesmead, which was intended for 60,000 residents, houses a mere 25,000 - about a quarter of which are black. And many are fearful about walking to the shops or returning at night. Thamesmead is an urban nightmare of ugly high-rise flats with walkways which encourage crime and vandalism. The only things to thrive here are violent gangs. The Hawksmoor Youth Club warned in December that the criteria for membership of at least one of these gangs is 'attacking young Afro-Caribbean or young Asian people, or their friends in the community'. It warned, then, that if 'this problem is not looked into, sooner or later, the repercussions for the community will be serious'.

Anti-Arab racism: Europe unites

On 19 April, over 300 people gathered at the Technical University, Berlin, to discuss the growth of the latest wave of anti-Arab racism presently sweeping across Western Europe. Delegates from Spain, Italy, Germany, France and representatives from the Institute of Race Relations and Black People Against War in the Gulf (UK) told the packed meeting of the different measures taken against Arabs during the Gulf war.

The conference was organised by the Anti-Racist Initiative in Berlin, which was concerned that little had been done to fight the special measures taken against the Arab and Muslim communities during the war. Press stories in Germany - which were reissued in London and used to justify the detentions here - indicating that terrorist attacks were planned, were never substantiated. But Arabs were portrayed as a threat to national security and, as a result, sent letters by the authorities, warning them not to participate in political activities and to report to police at least twice a week or face deportation.

According to the Associacion de Emigrantes Maroques en Espana and the Association of North African Initiative (AINAI), the idea that Arabs were a threat to national security was prevalent in Spain and Italy. In Italy, some Arabs were sent to special detention centres; others were informed that they would be deported if politically active. In fact, the Italian government went out of its way to frustrate the attempts of Mohsen Melliti of the AINAI to attend the Berlin conference at all. Latifa Benassou of Expressions Maghrebines au Feminin was particularly critical of the censorship in the French media that has led immigrant associations to fight to ensure that the true picture of deportations and anti-Arab racism was told. When the war started, the Ministry of the Interior stated that Arabs were a risk to national security, and Arabs were deported for the most spurious of reasons (for instance, if their car insurance was not paid). Shops also justified the sale of arms to the public during the war on the grounds that Arabs threatened the West.

For all the delegates, the problem of Eurocentrism within the peace movement was a key concern. And criticisms of the narrow approach of traditional anti-fascist organisations were also made. The stereotyping of all Arabs and Muslims as fundamentalist, and the failure to distinguish between anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism were seriously retarding the development of a dynamic pan-European anti-racist movement capable of fighting the new racism.

NORTH AFRICAN WOMEN ORGANISE

On 27 September, EMAF, a group of North African women, is organising a meeting for black women from all over Europe. EMAF was set up in 1985 to reflect the important role North African women play in society. The founders wanted to express the richness of their double culture and their commitment to a pluralist society. EMAF's aims include encouraging a dialogue between different communities and generations, re-evaluating their history and North African women's cultural inheritance, establishing training initiatives and providing information to challenge stereotypes.

At its centre next to a nursery school in Paris's busy 11th arondissement, EMAF offers cultural and sporting activities, with dance, theatre, music, Arabic lessons, film shows and intercultural days. With its links with a wide network of North African women's and other anti-racist organisations, EMAF made a very important intervention during autumn 1989 in the headscarf affair.

More information can be obtained from EMAF, 29 rue Godefroy Cavaignac, Paris 75011, France (tel 010-331 43 48 62 37)

Anti-fascists in Paris confronted some 10,000 Front National supporters who turned out to listen for an hour to the racist ramblings of French fascist leader Jean Marie Le Pen on May Day.

New Germany, new racism

With Europe 1992 around the corner, it is becoming increasingly important that anti-racists around Europe link up. In April, two members of CARF visited Berlin.

The anniversary of Hitler's birthday, 20 April, is a time for the far Right in Germany to flex its muscles. Throughout the course of the day, rumours were rife in anti-fascist circles. Would the fascists rally in Dresden, where two weeks ago a Mozambican worker was murdered, or would they try to attack the Kreuzberg, the focal point of Turkish life in west Berlin? In the event, the fascists had their main rally in Dresden, but some were also spotted in Lichtenberg, east Berlin.

In the new Germany, old hatreds are re-emerging. According to the *Antifaschistes Info Blatt*, Dresden is becoming of symbolic importance to the far Right. Since April 1990, attacks on alternative centres, punks and Third World workers have become commonplace, and on 20 October, 500 neo-nazis, led by Michael Kuhnen (now deceased) and the Austrian Gottfried Kuessell, marched there.

A number of neo-nazi street forces, giving themselves names such as the Association of Saxonian Werewolves, the Young Tempest, Security Squad East and National Resistance Germany, have also been formed. Anti-fascists are also concerned about the formation of a 'Defence Support Group', modelled on the SS.

The Anti-Racist Initiative, a group comprising mainly German women active in anti-deportation campaigns since 1986, used the occasion of Hitler's birthday to rally progressive forces in Berlin to form a new united grassroots initiative against racism and fascism. Over 30 Berlin groups attended the meeting. But making contact with people in the former GDR, CARF learned, is a slow process. In fact, the only participant from east Berlin to attend the meeting was ANC representative Bert Senaje, now helping to run east Berlin's Third World Centre.

Bert told CARF that the living conditions of contract workers from Mozambique, Angola, Cuba and Vietnam in the former Communist regime had been appalling: 'It was something like the hostel system in South Africa, but more modernised. Third World workers had no rights. But, after the so-called 'peaceful revolution', the situation has changed even for the worse. Third World workers have left in their thousands. Three weeks ago, Vietnamese workers were attacked in their hostels. It's difficult to go out in the evenings because you can't differentiate between who's a fascist and who is not, as it has become a kind of fashion to be a skinhead.'

On Easter Monday, the violence came to a head when a 28-year-old Mozambican, Jorge Gomondai, was killed by a group of skinheads, who attacked him in a cable car before throwing him out of the moving train. Fascists also attempted to attack a service in his memory, although young anti-fascists managed to beat them off.

The situation of Third World refugees in the former GDR is of particular concern. Asylum law in Germany is such that each federal state must take a quota of refugees. After reunification, the five new federal states of the former GDR were instructed to take their quotas, despite the fact that facilities for the refugees there are non-existent. Indeed, they are housed in barracks - either the quarters of former agricultural workers situated in the middle of nowhere, or old military installations. Refugees have no access to lawyers and are isolated socially, a member of Asylum, an organisation of social workers and lawyers formed in 1983, told CARF.

Street violence and the intensification of hatred is not confined to the east. Hatred of all non-Germans (and even Germans from the east, who are despised and considered backward) is increasing throughout the Republic. Poles visiting Frankfurt since visa restrictions were lifted in April have been greeted by neo-nazis yelling 'Germany for the Germans' and hurling concussion grenades and stones. Polish tourists are attacked regularly. Irresponsible outbursts by government ministers against gypsies, whom one politician described as 'fraudsters' and 'legendary nomads', and the possible introduction of a return programme or enforced deportation for 1,400 Roma gypsies to Yugoslavia, have led to the formation of citizens' initiatives against gypsies in Essen, Wuppertal and Bonn. Jewish organisations also report an intensification in attacks.

Third World students in west Berlin are also concerned about the violence and aware that the authorities will do nothing to protect them. In June 1990, a Pakistani student was attacked on the campus of Berlin University by a man who racially abused him and asked to see his passport before hitting him on the head with a fire extinguisher. Mahmud Azahr died in hospital six weeks later. His attacker was given a one-year suspended sentence, with the judge refusing to admit that the killing was racially motivated.

The effects of Germany's so-called 'Peaceful Revolution' are only now beginning to be felt. The country, whose Foreigners Law is probably the most harsh in Europe, is becoming a hotbed of racial violence. But over one weekend in Berlin, CARF experienced its other face - the richness of Berlin's alternative culture, the persistent struggles of immigrant organisations, and the new confidence of Third World students, migrants and refugees to shape the anti-racist agenda. It is from this other Germany that the new forces for social change are emerging.

STOP PRESS: After this article was written, two 16-year-old Namibians were thrown from a 4th floor window of an apartment in Wittenberge, east Berlin, when a crowd of German men broke in and attacked them. One of the Namibians is now fighting for his life.

1981-1991: How racist is Britain?

The Scarman Inquiry, set up in the wake of the rebellion of black youth against police and state racism in Brixton in April 1981, has been the cornerstone of government social policy on race for the past 10 years. The conclusion of that inquiry, published in the autumn of 1981, was that 'institutional racism does not exist'. In the police, Scarman found 'racial prejudice... manifest[ing] itself occasionally in the behaviour of a few officers in the streets'. In society at large, he found 'prejudice', 'discrimination' and 'racial disadvantage'. Of these, the first was a matter for white individuals; the second was to be dealt with by equal opportunities policies; and the last, which sounded like a disability inherent in black communities, was to be cured by treating 'special ethnic needs and problems'.

When the Scarman Report was published, CARF wrote: 'Far from being the balanced and fair inquiry portrayed in the media, the Scarman Report is one of the most conservative reports [of] recent years ... his wilful failure to acknowledge two decades of state and police racism in the teeth of the evidence stands at the centre of the report, informing all its conclusions and recommendations ... But then, Scarman was never meant to do anything but deflect the anger and frustration of blacks against police harassment and state racism from developing into a full-blown challenge to the status quo. And in that he has succeeded - temporarily.'

As a result of the report, there has been a burgeoning of 'equal opportunities policies', race 'advisers' in every field, ethnic monitoring and ethnic programmes. Ten years on, CARF looks back at Scarman, and asks: Was our scepticism justified? Or have the myriad of race equality and ethnic programmes helped to reduce or do away with racism in Britain? Do black people now have more equal access to jobs, to housing, to health care, to education, as a result of the policies of the past 10 years? Are they treated more fairly by the criminal justice system?

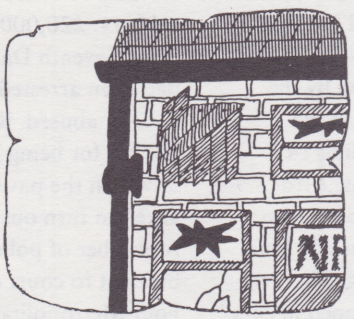
Below, we summarise a large number of recent surveys in the fields of housing, education, social security, employment and the criminal justice system. These bear out what black people and anti-racists working on the ground already know from their daily experience: black people are systematically denied equal and fair treatment and are discriminated against in all areas of life. Equal opportunities policies haven't worked.

The findings serve to remind us that the fight against racism is a fight for justice. It is a simple demand. It does not require bureaucracies, special departments and 'compensatory' policies, but a dismantling of policies which assign black people to the worst housing - or none; which treat black claimants as in some way 'undeserving' of welfare; which denigrate black children in schools and deny black people work; which criminalise black people on the streets and in the courts. As a prerequisite to all of this, the fight for justice for black people involves fighting against racist immigration policies which define black people as undesirable, and set the framework for institutional racism.

Without the recognition that racism is institutionalised, ingrained in legislation and in administrative policies at central and local level, and without a determination to root it out of these structures, all the equal opportunities policies in the world are doomed to failure.

HOUSING

Racist policies still abound in local authority housing departments.



In London's East End, Tower Hamlets local authority is still evicting Bangladeshi families from homeless families accommodation on the grounds that they should have stayed in Bangladesh, and has a sons and daughters policy whereby children of existing council tenants get priority on the waiting list. The CRE has taken them to court.

In London generally, black families are twice as likely to be made homeless as white families. Southwark favoured white tenants over black in a recent major improvement programme. In Hackney, black households are twice as likely as white to be offered the worst council housing.

Oldham Council has found racism still operating in its housing allocations system. Glasgow's points system favours white people. Liverpool's white residents are four times as likely to be allocated new houses as black residents, who also face delays of up to three years in being rehoused. In Rochdale, only 2% of council housing is occupied by Asians, of whom over two thirds have experienced racial harassment.

Local authorities are also failing to protect tenants from racial harassment, ignoring laws that could be used against perpetrators. Of 31 London boroughs, although 17 have adopted formal policies on racial harassment, only 10 have taken any court action - a total of 25 cases.

In the private rented sector, at least one-fifth of accommodation agencies discriminate against black people. In Ealing, almost half of all agencies have been found to do so, and in Bristol the figure is one-third. In the owner occupied sector, many estate agents direct white customers to 'white' areas and black to 'black' areas, and give a worse service to customers selling houses in 'black' areas. This means that black people generally live in run-down, older, neglected parts of towns. One result of this is that young black pedestrians (particularly Asian) are twice as likely to be knocked down by cars than young white pedestrians, as they are more likely to live in narrow streets with on-street parking and through traffic.

EDUCATION

Racism plays a major part in the schooling of the majority of black pupils. 58.9% of young black people say they have been racially harassed by pupils or teachers at school, and 45% say they have been racially harassed by teachers. Black parents are under-represented on boards of governors of schools. Under the 1988 Education Reform Act, white parents can remove their children from 'black' schools on explicitly racial grounds. The Act also demands that acts of worship are broadly Christian, and parents in Wakefield, Manchester, Ealing and elsewhere have threatened legal action against schools offering a multi-faith assembly.

In Tower Hamlets, of 500 primary schoolchildren allocated no place at any school in the borough in 1990, 95% were Bengali.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Black people face direct discrimination in claiming benefits. They face longer delays than white claimants; more wrongful refusals; more incorrect payments; and worse communication. In addition, requests to see passports are widespread among black claimants, even when they are clearly unnecessary.

EMPLOYMENT

Racism permeates both the public and private sectors in employment, according to the CRE, despite legislation and codes of practice on equal opportunities. Only a minority of employers have improved their recruitment and selection procedures. In the NHS, policies to combat racism have been found to be ineffective, and there are growing inequalities in promotion opportunities for black staff. NUPE claims that racism for nurses at work is widespread, and some hospitals use black nurses from Africa and Asia, who need the experience of work in a British hospital to complete their qualification, as unpaid labour. One London hospital has taken 40 'immigrant' nurses as unpaid labour each year for the past few years. And black doctors are discriminated against in filling senior house officer and registrar posts.

After a British Rail promotion test was found to be racist, the CRE is investigating similar tests used by a large number of big companies all over Britain. Recent industrial tribunal cases have exposed the racism in the army and in the police force. In another tribunal case, British Steel was found guilty of racism. The London Underground discriminates against black job applicants despite a formal equal

opportunities policy.
Selection for the 'fast stream' of the civil service discriminates in favour of white, male, Oxbridge candidates and against women and black people; in 1989, only one of 385 black applicants entered the 'fast stream'. Of 48,000 solicitors, 618 (1%) are black, of whom 92 are Afro-Caribbean. Of 434 circuit judges, only one is black, and the selection system of judges has been described as 'probably illegal under the Race Relations Act'.

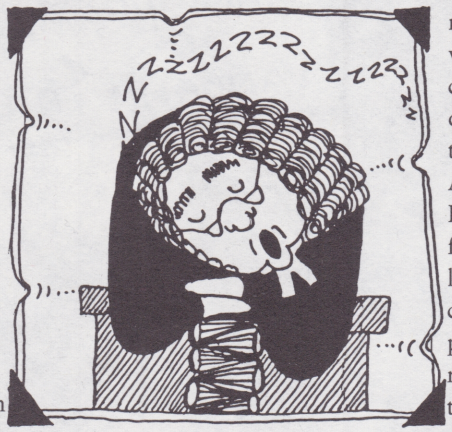
Secretarial agencies use euphemisms in recruiting staff such as 'home-grown' or 'English parentage' to replace blatant racism - the Association of Conservative Clubs staff were allegedly among those found to be discriminating. In the hotel industry, three-quarters of black workers are waiters, cleaners and porters, compared with half the white staff. There are virtually no black managers in hotels. The CRE claims that its code of practice has been ignored.
In the voluntary sector, too, black people are under-represented in management and training positions. The vast majority of national voluntary organisations have no black managers or training staff.
Earnings of black workers are less than those of white. In a Leicester survey, Asian workers were found to earn 20% less than their white colleagues. They are twice as likely to occupy unskilled and manual jobs. They are also more likely to be unemployed: the latest available figures show unemployment among black people generally at 14%, compared with 9% for white people; among Afro-Caribbeans the rate is 16% and among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis 25%.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Contact with the criminal justice system starts on the streets, with the police. In a recent survey, one-fifth of all young black men (aged between 15 and 24) had been stopped by the police in the preceding 14 months. Afro-Caribbean men were nearly four times as likely to be stopped in cars as whites, and young Asians over one-and-a-half times more likely. In Lewisham, 95% of all arrests for possession of 'crack' were of black people, even though over half 'crack' users are white and 79% of all known drug users in the borough are white.
On arrest, black people are more likely to be charged rather than cautioned for alleged offences. Black people are more likely to be assaulted, wrongfully arrested and to have evidence fabricated against them, too.

In 1990, the Metropolitan Police paid out over £500,000 in damages for assaults, wrongful arrests and malicious prosecutions. Of this, £130,000 was paid to the family of Winston Rose, who choked on his own vomit and died after being assaulted by four police, handcuffed and thrown in the back of a police van. Linford Christie received £50,000 damages for wrongful arrest. Former world boxing champion Maurice Hope received £50,000 for false imprisonment after a wrongful arrest on drugs charges.
Milton Morris, a window-cleaner, received £25,000 for malicious prosecution after police planted forensic evidence to frame him for robbery. £20,000 was paid to four black Seventh Day Adventists who had been arrested, assaulted and racially abused. Roy Tait was awarded £3,000 for being handcuffed face down on the pavement after being asked to turn out his pockets.
A number of police officers have been brought to court on criminal charges. Four Metropolitan Police officers have been charged with actual bodily harm after allegedly beating up a Nigerian mini-cab driver, Emmanuel Ziregbe. Two officers were charged with grievous bodily harm after an assault on Mohammed Hajazim split his testicle. Ten former Notting Hill police may be charged with assault, perjury and perverting the course of justice in relation to the notorious 'Black Watch' shift which is alleged to have fitted up a large number of black people on drugs charges. Meanwhile, in November 1990, a TSG unit broke down the door of London's most senior black officer, Chief Inspector Ron Hope. They said it was a mistake. Elsewhere in the country, 40 of the 95 cases in which the now disbanded West Midlands Serious Crime Squad allegedly fabricated evidence involve black people and three of the four successful appellants to date - Hassan Khan, Keith Parchment and Anthony Wellington - are black. Four officers involved in the Parchment case, including a detective inspector, have been charged with perjury. In Yorkshire, Glendon Spencer sued Bradford police for assault, wrongful arrest and malicious prosecution after he had been beaten, charged with

threatening behaviour, arrested and stripped. In Nottingham, black probation officer Grace James is suing the police after she was arrested for taking notes about police language and behaviour during the arrest of four young people. She was held for 15 hours.



Black people constitute nearly one-third of those appearing before magistrates on criminal offences, although they constitute less than 5% of the population. They are heavily under-represented on juries, particularly in Cardiff, Liverpool, Leeds, Bristol and Nottingham. Despite this under-representation, cases against black people often fall apart through lack of evidence, and Afro-Caribbean defendants are twice as likely to be acquitted by juries than white defendants (although in magistrates' and juvenile courts they are more likely to be convicted). However, while they are awaiting trial, they are twice as likely as white defendants to be kept in custody rather than given bail. 20% of all remand prisoners are black - in London the figure is even higher at 38%.

There is significant race discrimination in the Probation Service despite anti-racist policies. These policies have not been properly effected in the areas of bail, sentencing and social enquiry reports. Black defendants found guilty, or pleading guilty, are nearly twice as likely to be sent to prison than white people for similar offences. Nearly one in 10 young black men will have been sentenced to custody before they reach 21.

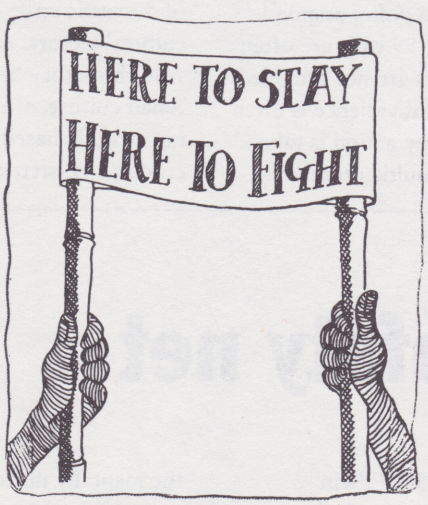
Once in prison, black people are systematically discriminated against and are allocated the worst jobs.

MENTAL HEALTH

Black people are over-represented on s136 referrals (ie, committal to mental hospital by police). Young Afro-Caribbeans born in the Caribbean are up to 25 times more likely than whites to be committed for detention under the Mental Health Act; those born in Britain are up to four times more likely to be committed. Black prisoners on remand are almost twice as likely than white people to be assessed as suffering from some serious mental illness. The proportion of Afro-Caribbeans in Broadmoor is very high at 12%.

SOURCES

Housing: Times (21.1.91); London Housing Unit report (September 1990); Out of order (CRE, 1990); Hackney Gazette (3.11.89); Black Housing (February 1991); Glasgow Post (31.8.90); Guardian (3.2.89); Equal access to council housing in Rochdale (Community Development Foundation, 1990); Making the law work against racial harassment (Legal Action, August 1990); Sorry, it's gone: racial discrimination in the private rented sector (CRE, 1990); Code of practice for owner-occupied housing (CRE, 1990); Accidents to young pedestrians (AA, 1990).



Education: THES (18.1.91); Minority ethnic communities and school governing bodies (National Consumer Council, 1990); Independent (14.7.90); Race and immigration (Runnymede Trust, April 1991).

Social security: Barriers to benefit: black claimants and social security (NACAB, 1991).

Employment: Memorandum to House of Commons Employment Committee (CRE, 1990); Action not words (NAHA, 1988); Independent (25.9.90, 27.9.90, 27.2.91, 23.3.91, 30.3.91); Independent on Sunday (5.8.90); British Medical Journal (27.10.90); Guardian (10.11.90, 29.1.91); Lines of progress (CRE, 1990); Report (Association of First Division Civil Servants, 1990); Report for Law Society and CRE (2.5.90); Thames Reports (13.11.90); Working in hotels (CRE, 1991); Survey (National Council for Voluntary Organisations, 1990); Earnings and ethnicity (MORI/ Leicester City Council, 1990); Ethnic origins and the labour market (Employment Gazette February 1991).

Criminal justice: Police and public in England and Wales (Home Office, 1991); Drugs, people and services in Lewisham (Goldsmiths College, 1991); Guardian (20.1.90, 23.1.90, 6.2.90, 24.2.90, 13.3.90, 2.8.90, 18.8.90, 15.12.90, 8.1.91, 9.1.91); Times (24.11.90); Independent (26.7.90, 29.11.90); Willis 1988; National Black Caucus (25.6.90); Black people and remands into custody (NAPO, 1989); Is justice colour blind? (1987); Race and criminal justice (NACRO, 1989, 1991); Race relations in prisons (Genders and Players, 1989).

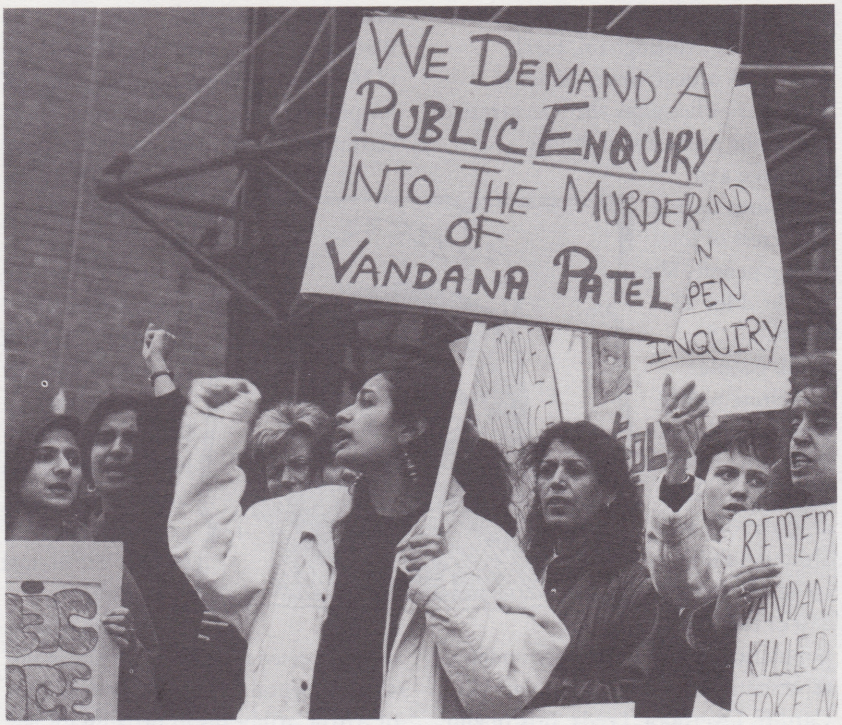
Mental health: Black people, mental health and the courts (NACRO, 1990); Race and immigration (Runnymede Trust, April 1991)

Why did Vandana have to die?

Asian women's organisations across London are coming together to demand a thorough investigation into the death of 21-year-old Vandana Patel, who was killed on 29 April by her husband whilst in a domestic violence unit at Stoke Newington police station in east London.

'The circumstances in which Vandana died', says Anita Kirpal of the Newham Asian Women's Project, 'are truly amazing. Her husband was allowed inside Stoke Newington police station armed with a knife with which he stabbed Vandana. And the murder actually took place in a domestic violence unit during an interview between the couple during which no police officers were present'.

There are 49 domestic violence units in London. According to Asian women, these units are increasingly taking on the role of mediating between couples rather than serving to protect women from violent attack. According to a statement signed by 10 Asian Women's Refuges: 'Vandana's tragic death throws into question the whole way in which police respond to domestic violence. 999 calls are often ignored; interpreters are not provided and proof of physical violence is often demanded before any action is taken.' Furthermore, 'the multicultural training that the police officers undergo actually works against Asian women', says Anita. 'It means that police trivialise violence against Asian women, seeing the issue instead as that of domestic strife due to religious and cultural factors. And police officers, who think they know it all about Asian culture, are adopting a patronising attitude based on little more than crude racial stereotyping'.



A campaign across east London is now planned and pickets of Stoke Newington police station have already taken place. Amongst the women's demands are a public inquiry into Vandana Patel's death and an immediate review of the policies and practice of domestic violence units.

Further information: Remember Vandana Patel Campaign, PO Box 225, London E7 9AA

No safety net

On 3 December 1990, Edwin Robinson, a 28-year-old black man hanged himself in Brixton's notorious F wing - where psychiatric patients are put. Like several recent black deaths in custody, the jury verdict in April included a finding about lack of care. By rights, Edwin should never have been in prison but in hospital.

Clerkenwell magistrates court, where he appeared, is supposed to prevent the mentally ill from spending long periods in prison awaiting medical assessment and hospital referral. But, for Edwin the scheme broke down when first a social worker could not be found to authorise a section 2 (under the Mental Health Act) and then, when a different avenue was tried, no bed was available.

Edwin ended up with over 200 other mentally sick men in F wing on 30 November. And, like in so many previous cases (which have ended in suicide), his medical records weren't there and no doctor assessed him. It was but three days later that prison officer Davies shouted down to his colleagues,'I've got one hanging up here.'

It's not one. Remember Samuel Carew, Kelroy Briscoe, Sajjan Singh Atwal, Martin Richmond, Wayne Tombison, Aslam Khan, Delroy McKnight? They were all black men with psychiatric problems who, in the last three years, were wrongly placed in prison and also took their own lives.

Sport

RED CARD FOR RACISTS

The football terrace chant of 'Going down, going down' could soon mean more than relegation to a lower division. From next season, it could describe the fate awaiting those who chant racist abuse at black footballers.

A Bill currently proceeding through parliament aims to make the chanting of racist abuse at football matches a criminal offence, punishable by fines or imprisonment.

Such a law was recommended by the Taylor Report of January 1990 which followed the Hillsborough disaster. However, unlike some of Taylor's recommendations, this one was not taken up by the Government, because, it said, the current Public Order Act was sufficient. Now, however, it has changed its tune.

Last Autumn, the *Daily Mirror* ran a high profile campaign demanding an anti-racist law. This campaign, which included strong statements from leading black footballers, focused particularly on Everton, where serious racist abuse has gone unchallanged over a number of years. It was backed by an all-party parliamentary football committee, chaired by Labour's Tom Pendry, which decided to bring forward its own Bill.

The Football (Offences) Bill was published on 27 March and has proceeded quickly as the government is now officially supporting it. By the end of April, it had already received its third reading (stage before the Lords) and should be law in plenty of time for the next football season.

For more information, contact Leeds Fans United Against Racism & Fascism, c/o Leeds Trades Club, Saville Mount, Leeds 7.

Following an alarming rise in BNP activity in Edinburgh, football fans have formed a Supporters' Camapaign Against Racism in Football (SCARF). The fans are trying to bring together supporters of Edinburgh's two main teams, Hearts and Hibs, whose black players are regularly taunted with a barrage of racial abuse.

SCARF, c/o Box 4, 66 York Place, Edinburgh.

LA law

Within weeks of the videotaped bludgeoning on 3 March of a black Los Angeles motorist, Rodney King, by four police officers while 11 others stood and watched, Los Angeles police commissioner Daryl Gates was publicly proclaiming his department to be a 'model' for the nation. Seen in the context of a national criminal justice system which has imprisoned black males at a rate four times higher than black males in South Africa - 3,109 per 100,000 compared to 729 per 100,000 under the apartheid system - Daryl Gates may well be right.

According to public opinion surveys, a quarter of Los Angeles residents have personally witnessed or been involved in an incident where the police have behaved brutally; the victims were overwhelmingly black. In Los Angeles alone, since 1978 (the year that Chief Gates took office), 27 people, most of them African Americans, have died as a result of chokeholds applied by the police. Gates has ordered the police department into massive paramilitary operations targetted against the black community. In April 1988, in one night of 'Operation Hammer', 1,500 black youths were arrested and thousands more stopped and searched on the Los Angeles streets. In the name of the 'war on drugs', any tactics can be condoned and any amount of 'collateral damage' tolerated, as long as the police confine their 'war' to the black neighbourhoods. Was the Rodney King beating an aberration? The facts suggest otherwise. A cursory look at recent police activity around the country reveals the following:

During the summer of 1990, police in Las Vegas, Nevada, barged into the home of former basketball star Charles Bush to search for drugs. They did not have a warrant. After arousing Bush from his sleep at gunpoint, police subdued him with a chokehold until he suffocated. An organiser for United Farmworkers, Dolores Huerta, was participating in a political rally in San Francisco in 1988 when a police tactical squad moved in to break up the demonstration. Weighing just 7 stone and under five feet tall, she was pummelled repeatedly and beaten with a nightstick - all of it recorded on videotape. She ended up with six broken ribs and a pulverised spleen.

In 1990, police in Houston, Texas stopped a black security guard, Byron Gillum, when he was travelling home after work. They thought his late model car was 'suspicious'. A check of his licence and other documents revealed everything was in order. The police then spied the revolver Gillum uses for his job and opened fire on him, killing him at the scene.

Less than a week after the beating of Rodney King, two black youths were involved in a car chase in Atlanta, Georgia. When they were stopped, 15-year-old Vincent Turner was shot dead by the police, and his companion, 19-year-old Claude Burns, seriously injured. No weapon was found at the scene.

A decade ago, the US stood third in the world in its rate of incarceration, behind South Africa and the USSR. Today, the US is first, with one out of every four African-American males either behind bars, or awaiting trial or on parole. Young black men on the streets are a statistic waiting to happen. And Chief Daryl Gates remains on the job, despite the attempts of the black mayor of Los Angeles and tremendous community pressure to have him removed.

CAFE JAM A new black art gallery, coffee house, cultural and 'drop in' centre has opened in the heart of Brixton in south London. It looks set to become a much-needed base and focal point for the local community. Cafe Jam (which serves authentic Jamaican cooking) and the Sobokkai gallery (which houses contemporary art from the Caribbean, Africa and black artists in Europe) will mix culture, politics, art and entertainment. Establishing such a centre has been the dream of youth and community worker Len Foulkes and his partner. Poetry readings, one-act plays and live music are planned for most weekends.
Cafe Jam is at 101 Acre Lane.

Reviews

THE ARAB WORLD

While CARF has detailed the rise in racial tension and violence in British schools due to the Gulf conflict (see CARF No 2), there has been little discussion so far about the educational issues raised by the war. Yet, in defending their students against anti-Arab racism, teachers have had to address not just the xenophobia of the tabloids but also the prejudices and stereotypes that obtain in much of the school curriculum. For there, too, Arab culture and Islam is all too often reduced to a caricature which - in the words of Richard Webster - 'is essentially cruel, inflexible and repressive'. A recent publication goes some way in challenging such a racist representation.

The Arab World is an information pack specifically aimed at schools. Beautifully designed and illustrated, it conveys in straightforward language the facts (as opposed to myths) about Arab history and Islam, as well as detailed information on the geographic, economic and political situation of individual Arab states. Far from the monoliths so favoured by the Western media, the materials here portray both Arab society and Islam as a 'varied and rich' tapestry of different religious, political and social formations.

This emphasis on diversity is to be welcomed, if only to explode the frozen images of Muslims still prevalent in much LEA multiculturalism. Yet the materials also draw out what is common to Arab societies. Thus, we read how each of the 21 Arab states - to a lesser or greater extent - was forged in the crucible of imperial conquest and Arab national resistance to it. The chapter on the Palestine-Israeli conflict - that living testimony to imperial expropriation - is, in its sweep, clarity and accuracy, amongst the finest available.

It is difficult to stress the importance of such a publication at such a time. Here, at last, is a genuinely responsive, readable and objective history of the Arab people. Having just gone through a war in which over 200,000 of these people were killed, it becomes a moral as well as educational imperative to teach this real history to our students. The pack should be a compulsory purchase for all schools.

The Arab World, published by the Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding. Available from CAABU, 21 Collingham Road, London SW5 0NU (£2.75).

MONITORING RACISM

Most students studying 'race' at college are sent off to the library to examine heavy tomes written by 'race relations experts'. Yet a far more graphic and realistic account of 'race relations' can be found in the annual reports of various grassroots monitoring groups. Those of the Newham Monitoring Project (NMP), Leicester Racial Attacks Monitoring Project (RAMP) and the Greenwich Action Committee Against Racist Attacks (GACARA), for example, do not merely provide a list of cases, or a string of statistics; they document a slice of life in racist Britain.

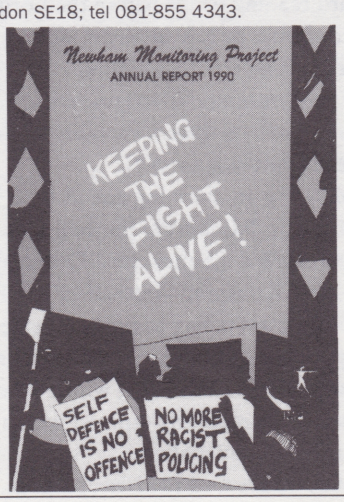
NMP has been writing informative annual reports since 1982, and its approach has provided a model for other organisations to follow. This year's 68-page report warns of alarming trends both in more violent racial incidents and in police attempts to criminalise the victims. The National Front has threatened to open a bookstore in Newham. NMP is clearly worried that this, when coupled with police plans to build a new holding station (designed to deal with public disorder) at Forest Gate, could make patterns of racial harassment and police criminalisation even more fraught.

The annual report of Leicester RAMP, which was set up in 1986, poignantly describes the particular vulnerability of black women to persistent harassment. Take the case of Mrs B, a single mother with six children, who has had frogs and mud thrown through her letterbox and is regularly called a 'Paki'; or Ms K, whose 6-year-old child was hit on the head with a large stone dropped from the flat above. Another important issue raised in RAMP's report is the question of local authority interference in the internal workings of grassroots black organisations. Since 1990, a board of directors, comprising six councillors, five of whom are white, has been imposed on RAMP to oversee its financial management. RAMP is now fighting for 'a community orientated management committee'.

GACARA services the black community in an area of extreme racist violence - as the murder of Rolan Adams demonstrates. The situation is compounded by the presence, in neighbouring Bexley, of the BNP headquarters, and there is documentation about the BNP's activities in GACARA's annual report. Amongst messages left on GACARA's answering phone was, 'This is Adolf Hitler. We are going to burn you mother fuckers out. You coons will have your black asses whacked off your fuckin' hides, you mother fuckers.'

These annual reports, more than anything else, remind us that more concerted action against racism and fascism is required.

NMP, 382 Katherine Road, London E7; tel 081-555 8151. Leicester RAMP, 6 Seymour Street, Highfields, Leicester LE2 0LB; tel 0533-621727. GACARA, 115-123 Powis Street, Woolwich, London SE18; tel 081-855 4343.



Trends: health

An Asian family with a four-week-old baby were told by their GP in Swindon to register elsewhere for needing too much treatment. They are taking their case to the Family Service Health Authority. The procedures do not give a right of appeal. (*Eastern Eye* 9/4/91).

The Overseas Doctors Association has called for a Europe-wide group to be formed to combat discrimination faced by doctors who have qualified outside the European Community. A 1975 EC directive ruled that the qualification of doctors with first degrees gained outside the EC would not be recognised in states other than the one where the doctor was already working. However, a number of 'white' nations (eg, the US, Australia and S. Africa) have been exempted. Critics believe that the ruling is aimed at restricting the freedom of movement of black doctors. There are 20,000 black doctors practising in the NHS. The coming of the single European market has, says the ODA, made the matter more urgent. It has condemned the BMA for its reluctance to tackle the matter. (*Caribbean Times* 9/4/91)

Doctors sending people to hospital are to be asked their patients' race under a new Department of Health scheme next year. The department says it is trying to remedy the fact that people from ethnic minority communities do not make the fullest use of the NHS. However, doctors and civil liberty groups say the scheme is insensitive and could breach patient confidentiality. (*Observer* 21/4/91) Black people are victims of over zealous use of the Mental Health Act and powers of detention, a conference was told by a Broadmoor hospital psychiatrist. Mia Rice of the Afro-Caribbean Mental Health Association said that the problem of racism was part of a more general problem of bad practice. Research at the London Hospital indicates that black people made up 25% of the clients, while only 5% of the population. (*Voice* 2/4/91)

CARF is monitoring trends and would welcome readers sending local press cuttings to us.

Update

Racial violence

A 19-year-old white youth, Paul Dunne, was stabbed to death in Hoxton, north London, on 28 March in a fight with two white youths which started when they racially abused Paul's black friend. Paul died from a stab wound to the chest. The police say they are not treating the incident as racially motivated. 20-year-old Edward Roderick Burns, a self-employed builder from West Norwood, has been charged with murder and appeared at Old Street Magistrates' Court on 22 May.

9-year-old Liam Robinson was thrown over a bridge by a white teenager in Livingstone, West Lothian. As Liam desperately clung for his life by his fingertips over the 40 foot drop, his attacker bent his fingers back to make him fall. Luckily, an 11-year-old friend managed to fight off the attacker and pull Liam to safety. Police say the attack was racially motivated as Liam's father is a 'coloured American'. They are treating the incident as attempted murder. (*Daily Record* 9.4.91)

A gang of white youths chased 10-year-old Hassan Akbar into the path of a car. His family have kept a bedside vigil at Preston Hospital where Hassan was rushed with severe head injuries. He now lays in a coma and is said to be in a 'critical condition'. (*Eastern Eye* 23.4.91)

Racists in Birmingham set fire to the car of an Asian doctor. In a previous incident, Mr Assattar Awan's car was painted all over with the words 'nigger' and 'APL' (Anti-Pakistani League). (*Birmingham Evening Mail* 9.4.91)

Norwich Community Against Racism has taken up the case of a 25-year-old black man who was jailed for two years for defending himself against a vicious racist attack. Brian Moore, along with two friends, was racially abused and then attacked by 15 white youths, brandishing scaffolding poles, in the centre of Norwich in April 1989. Brian was later charged with violent disorder. For further information, contact Brian Moore Injustice Campaign, Norwich Community Against Racism, c/o Labour Club, Bethel Street, Norwich.

Campaigns

Cardiff Alibi evidence said to undermine the Cardiff Three convictions which was not made available to the defence at the trial has now been disclosed to lawyers. Witness statements support the defence case as to the whereabouts of each of the three on the night of the murder of Lynette White. Solicitor Bernard de Maid has asked the Crown Prosecution Service whether evidence helpful to the Three was 'known to certain police offficers in the case and has been withheld from us throughout this case and remains so withheld'. (*Independent* 21/3/91)

Police harassment

27-year-old Colin Bascom is to sue the police after they raided his flat on the Mandela Court Estate, Reading, without a search warrant, ostensibly looking for drugs. Mandela Court has been labelled the Broadwater Farm of Reading, and local people say they are being unfairly targetted because drug dealing is done by outsiders. Colin Bascom, says that he himself has been stopped and searched on no less than 15 occasions.

Black teacher Alister Philips has been cleared of causing grievous bodily harm to a police officer at the Inner London Crown Court. During the trial, Sybil Phoenix MBE, Alister's mother, told the court that she had witnessed her son being beaten by several police officers who burst into her home on 6 April last year. The incident happened when police stopped Alister as he made his way home and demanded to search him. When he refused, he was assaulted and held in a dangerous headlock. In desperation, he bit into the tip of the policeman's finger. His plea of self-defence was accepted. (*Voice* 30.4.91)

Allegations of racism made against the now disbanded West Midlands serious crime squad have been reinforced by the release on appeal in March of a Birmingham man, Anthony Wellington. Of four men released to date, after claims of the squad's malpractice, he is the third who is black. Another 95 complaints are being investigated by the West Yorkshire police, 40 of which come from people 'with mixed race, Asian, or Afro-Caribbean backgrounds'.

After spending three years in prison for a crime he did not commit, Anthony was forced to spend 12 more hours in custody because of loss of remission relating to another sentence. Meanwhile, in Birmingham, his pregnant sister was arrested as she returned from celebrating the appeal victory, charged with assault and held overnight. Sandra Wellington said: 'I think they knew I was Tony's sister, and they just wanted to have a go.'

Calendar: race & resistance

MARCH

18 On their release, Birmingham 6 highlight other miscarriages of justice, including Tottenham 3 ... Tower Hamlets council in east London promises High Court that racial discrimination in housing will not occur.

19 Dowager Lady Birdwood to be charged with incitement to racial hatred relating to anti-semitic literature.

20 104% increase in racial incidents reported to Edinburgh police in 1990.

21 Two men imprisoned for racist attack on Abdul Raza man in Livingston, Scotland ... NUT conference told of increase in racist attacks on Jewish schoolchildren in east London ... Bishops criticise Britain's asylum policy.

23 Police drop charges against the Bhatti family from south London.

25 British Rail admits bias against Asian workers in promotion tests ... Anthony Wellington wins appeal against robbery conviction in West Midlands serious crime squad aftermath ... Chris Smith MP calls for inquiry into suicide of mentally ill Delroy McKnight in Wandsworth prison in January.

26 Government increases immigration staff by 350 to curb 'flood of bogus asylum seekers'.

27 Metropolitan police assistant commissioner warns of possible 'serious disorder' involving Asian youths fighting back against racial attacks in east London.

28 Paul Dunne killed when defending black friend in racist attack in Hoxton, London.

APRIL

1 Afro-Caribbean Mervin Martin, acquitted of drugs charges, is to sue police and Hackney council after spending nine months in prison and losing his council home.

4 Sharp increase in race incidents reported to Coventry police in 1990.

5 Metropolitan police under-reporting complaints by 30%, including those of racism and assault ... Coroner demands immediate review of 'appalling' prison procedures after lack of care verdict at inquest into suicide of Edwin Robinson, who was mentally ill, in Brixton prison.

9 Notting Hill police officer charged following allegations of planting drugs, including on Rupert Taylor who was awarded £100,000 damages.

12 Cheltenham Tory to be charged with incitement to racial hatred after remarks made about black candidate John Taylor ... Visa restrictions on Iraqi nationals, imposed during Gulf war, lifted.

14 Prison service circulates race relations manual.

15 Iraqi in Scottish police force taking racial harassment case by fellow officers case to industrial tribunal.

17 Zairean asylum-seeker attempts suicide in Pentonville prison.

19 Football (Offences) Bill outlines proposals to ban racial chants at football matches.

23 Metropolitan police pays V. Janardanan £40,000 compensation after conviction for attempted shoplifting overturned by Court of Appeal.

24 Complaints against police have reached an all-time high, says Police Complaints Authority.

25 Home Secretary refuses to ban Rev Al Sharpton from entering UK.

27 1,500 people march to BNP's Bexley headquarters to protest the murder of Rolan Adams ... *Guardian* reports on Iraqi Kurds refused political asylum in UK.

29 Vandana Patel killed by husband in Stoke Newington police station's domestic violence unit.

MAY

1 Smoke-bomb thrown into Friends House in London before meeting to be addressed by Rev Al Sharpton.

2 Zairean asylum-seeker returned to Zaire despite last minute stay by court.

4 Government plans for 'streamlining' procedures for asylum-seekers, reports the *Times*, include curtailing appeal rights.

5 Zairean asylum-seeker deported against judges ruling cannot be traced.

8 4 police officers accused of attacking Emmanuel Ziregbe committed for trial at Southwark Crown Court.

9 War Crimes Act passed.

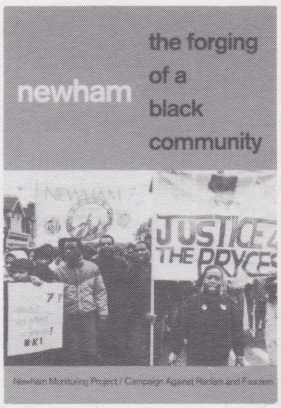
12 Metropolitan police announce permanently armed police patrols from 1 July.

13 Victim Support report says police failing to deal with racial harassment.

15 Home Office agrees to clause banning racial discrimination in the criminal justice system.

18 60 Muslim graves in Bradford cemetery desecrated with racist slogans. The *Guardian* reports rioting in Bradford between Asian and white youths.

23 Government announces plans for further restrictions on asylum-seekers, including limiting rights of appeal.



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